3.5 Treaty Indian Ceremonial and Subsistence Salmon Uses

Introduction

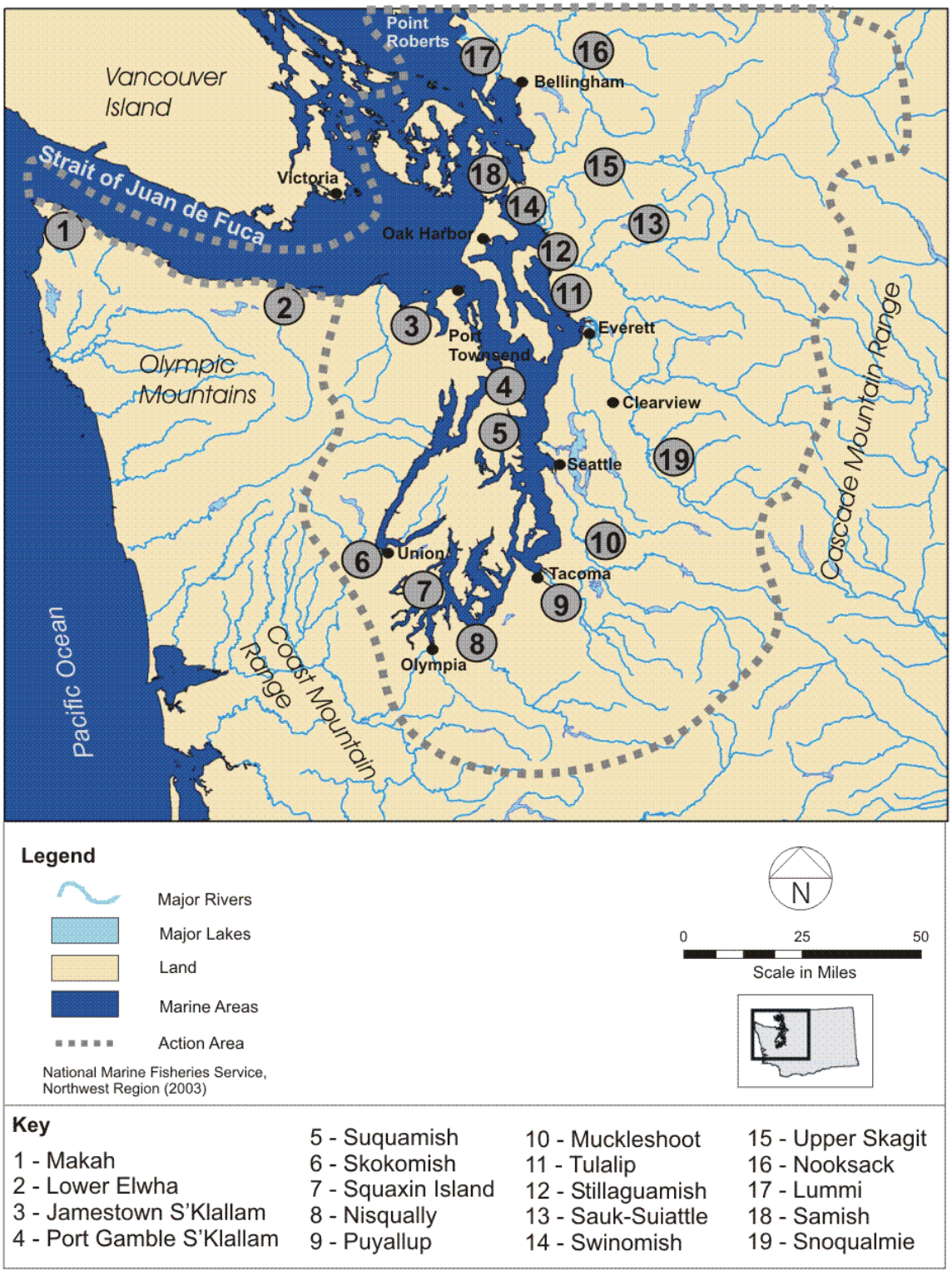
Salmon is a key resource for each of the 17 treaty Indian tribes within the Puget Sound Action Area. Tribes with adjudicated fishing rights include the Makah, Elwha Klallam, Jamestown S'Klallam, Port Gamble S'Klallam, Skokomish, Squaxin Island, Nisqually, Puyallup, Muckleshoot, Suquamish, Tulalip, Stillaguamish, Sauk-Suiattle, Swinomish, Upper Skagit, Nooksack, and Lummi. Their right to fish for salmon is previously described in Subsection 3.4. The Samish and Snoqualmie tribes are also federally-recognized tribes within the action area whose ancestors were parties to the Treaty of Point Elliott (Figure 3.5-1). These two tribes do not have federally-recognized treaty fishing rights at the present time. Although their access to fish is limited (as described in Subsection 4.5 of this Environmental Impact Statement), their utilization of salmon for ceremonial and subsistence purposes is similar to that of the tribes with adjudicated fishing rights.

Salmon is ubiquitous (omnipresent) in Indian culture within the action area. It is regularly eaten by individuals and families, and served at gatherings of elders and to guests at feasts and traditional dinners. Salmon is treated ceremoniously by Indians throughout the action area at present as it has been for centuries. Salmon is of nutritional, cultural, and economic importance to tribes. To Indians of the action area, salmon is a core symbol of tribal identity, individual identity, and the ability of Indian cultures to endure. It is a constant reminder to tribal members of their obligation as environmental stewards. Traditional Indian concepts stress the relatedness and interdependence of all beings including humans within the action area. Thus, the survival and well-being of salmon is seen as inextricably linked to the survival and well being of Indian people and the cultures of the tribes. Many Indian people within the action area share traditional stories that explain the relationship between mountains, the origins of rivers, and the origins of salmon that inhabit the rivers (Ballard 1929). In traditional stories, even the humblest of creatures play important roles in sustaining life and balance in the ecological niche that has supplied food for Indian people for generations (Ballard 1927). Stories recount the values Indian people place on supporting healthy, welcoming rivers and good salmon runs. Salmon is also a symbol used in art and other representations of tribal identity.

Definition of Terms

The word *sustainable*, or *sustaining*, as used in this subsection, refers to the way indigenous people use resources to meet their present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This use is consistent with that employed by tribal members. Many Indian people

Figure 3.5-1. Location of federally-recognized Puget Sound Indian tribes that are parties to the proposed action.



speak of current environmental concerns regarding salmon in the context of their concern for children and grandchildren.

The words *traditional* or *traditionally* in this subsection refer to continuity between the past and the present in terms of Indian perception and use of salmon, as well as Indian ideas about allocation and management. Occasionally, *traditional* refers to the ethnographic description of practices and beliefs of the action area's indigenous people at the time the United States government made treaties with western Washington Indian tribes (e.g., during the mid-nineteenth century).

The term *subsistence* is used in the anthropological sense. In part, subsistence refers to the ways in which indigenous people utilize the environment and resources provided by it in order to survive; that is, to meet the nutritional needs of members of the society. The interplay of resources, technology and work created a unique economy in which Indian people of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Hood Canal, and North and South Puget Sound thrived. Subsistence encompasses the relationships between people and their environment, between people, and between people and their past. Salmon species provided a major part of the subsistence resource within the action area.

Ceremonial and subsistence fish refers to non-commercial fish caught by tribal members and used by tribes for either ceremonial or subsistence purposes. Fishers engaged in commercial fisheries may take a portion of their catch for *ceremonial and subsistence* use, and designate that as "take home fish." Or a tribe may open a fishery specifically to catch fish for a ceremony or other community use when there is no concurrent commercial opening.

3.5.1 Historic Fisheries

3.5.1.1 The Ethnographic Record

The ethnographic record is unequivocal: all tribes in the Puget Sound Action Area share a long tradition of fishing. The cultures and societies of Indian people within the action area at treaty time were well adapted to the riverine and marine environments of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Hood Canal, North Puget Sound and South Puget Sound. Indian people developed economies based primarily on anadromous fish. These cultures and economies developed subsequent to the stabilization of shorelines within the action area; that is, around 5,000 years ago. After that time, the conditions of water in the rivers and streams could support the returning fish populations. The abundance and predictability of the fish supported permanent human settlement along these rivers and streams as well as along the saltwater shorelines of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Hood Canal, North Puget Sound and South Puget Sound.

Some archaeological surveys have been conducted within the action area. Data from these sites by no means provide a comprehensive view of ancient fishing practices. Geological research demonstrates significant alterations in elevations and land deformations in parts of Puget Sound associated with a major earthquake approximately 1,100 years ago. Older sites may have been submerged at that time. The few sites that have been systematically excavated and analyzed demonstrate a long tradition of fishing. These are dated to at least 1,000 years before present, the time of the alteration in water levels (Stein 2000; and Croes 1996). Some sites indicate occupation up to and through treaty time (Stein 2003).

Fisheries, for the most part salmon fisheries, were the defining feature of the cultures and economies of indigenous people of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Hood Canal, North Puget Sound, and South Puget Sound in late eighteenth century descriptions of the area. The entire action area was characterized by its dependence upon seafood (Gunther 1950). George Gibbs, the lawyer/ethnologist who helped to draft and negotiate the Indian treaties in western Washington, wrote that "the great staple food" of the region was salmon, and noted the extraordinary quantities available in Puget Sound and elsewhere in the region. "Salmon," he said, "form the most important staple of subsistence" (Gibbs [1856] 1877). In anthropological terms, the relationship to salmon among indigenous people formed a "culture core." Salmon were the focus of economic activities, technological development, and ideologies. The interface of these supported the invention and application of highly successful harvesting, processing, and storage techniques. The Indian people of the action area acquired finely-tuned local knowledge regarding salmon resources, and developed sustainable methods of harvest.

Salmon were harvested using a variety of techniques, including trolling, spearing, gaffing, and taking fish in nets. Gear included several kinds of weirs, traps, dip nets, gill nets, seines, and, in certain localities, reef nets. Technologies were developed for particular circumstances, locations, and species. Harvesting technologies were extremely successful. Efficient techniques made it possible to harvest large numbers of fish as they ascended the rivers. These techniques were designed to allow selectivity in harvest, shaping of runs, and adequate escapement to the spawning grounds. William Elmendorf, an anthropologist, produced an ethnographic monograph describing the Twana (Skokomish) people of Hood Canal, including their use of weirs, based upon his fieldwork in the 1930s and 1940s. He wrote that, "Ordinarily one or more lattice sections were removed for a time each day or at night except during dip-net operations, to allow some fish to proceed to the spawning grounds or to weirs farther upstream. The Twana people believed that the 'salmon people' would be angered if this was not done, and would refuse to return for the next year's run" (Elmendorf [1960] 1992). Arthur Ballard, whose

observations of South Puget Sound Indian peoples were made at the end of the nineteenth and during the early twentieth century, also discussed the practice of opening weirs (Ballard 1957). Escapement allowed sufficient fish to continue upstream to spawn. Escapement also allowed sufficient fish for Indian people fishing further upriver. Fisheries were managed with an eye to sustainability, and runs were interrupted only by unanticipated natural events such as climatic or geologic incidents. Later, runs were interrupted by dams, water diversions, and other impediments constructed by non-Indians.

Winter village sites were established along drainage systems of salmon rivers and streams. The economic lives of indigenous people were organized around the seasonal runs of fish in these streams. The abundance of these fish, along with the technologies developed to harvest, process, and store the fish, sustained families and communities year-around. Salmon were eaten fresh, were cured in a variety of ways, and were stored to be consumed later or traded. Trade and commerce in fish were extensive among Indian people in western Washington and with tribal people beyond this region. Curing methods assured that harvest could be kept over an extended time for later consumption and for inter-tribal commerce.

3.5.1.2 Tribal Areas, Reservation Locations, and the Importance of Salmon

In the mid-nineteenth century, at the time of the 1850s treaties, Indian tribes occupied river drainages and marine areas throughout the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Hood Canal, North Puget Sound and South Puget Sound. Tribal members fished in the lakes, rivers, streams, creeks, bays, inlets, and open waters of the action area. Salmon returned to and were harvested from any stream that was not otherwise impassable to the fish. In general, where there were fish, there were Indian people fishing. Anthropologist Marian Smith, who worked with the Puyallup and Nisqually people, wrote that, "Fishing was the most constant occupation and whatever a man's economic specialty, it did not greatly interfere with the fishing routine" (Smith 1940).

Reservations established by the treaties were located on or near these drainage systems or marine areas because the framers of the treaties recognized the importance of the fisheries. For example, George Gibbs noted in 1855 in the official treaty journal that the proposed Puyallup reservation "affords a good site for a village, with ground for potato patches and a small stream at which the Indians take their winter salmon," and that "the Indians will require the shore only, this tribe being exclusively fishing Indians" (Swindell 1942). The treaties acknowledged that tribes reserved their right to continue to fish; the treaties guaranteed access to traditional fishing grounds (see Subsection 3.4 of this Environmental Impact Statement).

3.5.1.3 Post Treaty Period Fishing

Tribal fisheries in Washington faced many obstacles during the decades following statehood in 1889. These included state fishing regulations, dam construction, river diversions, development and urbanization, and pollution. In spite of these obstacles, Indian peoples maintained their identity with salmon and exhibited resistance and resiliency in their commitment to maintain their access to salmon.

1899–1920s

In the early years following statehood, fishing continued to be a primary subsistence activity for Indian people. Indian fishermen were a common sight in and around the action area. Photographs from this period show western Washington Indians fishing or processing fish. Some of these photographs have been identified by archivists as Puget Sound Indian men fishing at weirs (1890–1895), Makah women drying fish on racks (1900), Snohomish people at Tulalip processing salmon (1907), and Lummi men trolling for salmon (1900) (American Indians of the Pacific Northwest Digital Collection). By the end of the second decade of the twentieth century, Indian rights to fish off-reservation had been disregarded repeatedly by the state. Indian people were often arrested for "unlawful fishing" by state game wardens.

Fishing regulations passed by the state prohibited use of traditional Indian fishing gear such as weirs and traps. Indians were not allowed to fish in usual and accustomed places and were often challenged by enforcement officers. Treaties were invoked by tribal members who asserted their right to fish. Dams, lacking fish passage facilities, were constructed in the years just prior to World War I. Urban populations grew, non-Indian fishing proliferated, and development destroyed prime salmon habitat. Fish runs were threatened. Tribal members predicted serious environmental consequences for fish habitat. They also saw that the decline in fish habitat and runs threatened Indian livelihoods and indigenous cultures. Tribes struggled to retain their access to salmon and their rights to harvest salmon.

1930s–1960s

In the mid-twentieth century, with increasing state regulation of fishing, salmon became less available and it became more difficult for Indian people to fish in their traditional places, or with their traditional gear. However, salmon retained their symbolic and nutritional significance to Indian people because fishing itself retained its value and importance as a focus for cultural teaching, learning, and activity. Tribal people found ways to fish and continued to value and consume fish whenever they were available. Indian people defied state laws in order to obtain traditional foods from traditional locations and affirm their core cultural identity and treaty-guaranteed right to fish. Many tribal members

regularly recount stories of family members who fished under cover of darkness or confronted game wardens. Indian people went to jail and to court in the 1930s to assert their treaty rights.

In spite of the obstacles, during the depression in the 1930s many Indian people fished and ate salmon year-around. Some Indian people report that because Indians were part of a fishing culture, they fared better through this period than some of their non-Indian neighbors. Indian people continued fishing in the 1940s. Adults born and reared during this period remember being taught how to fish by elders. Some elders were still making nets and fish spears and passing the knowledge on to the youth. Indian people continued to cure and smoke fish and eat fish year-around. Youth were expected to help in all chores connected with curing fish, including helping to hang the fish in the smokehouse and keeping the fires stoked in the smokehouse. Young people were taught to maneuver canoes in the rivers, and witnessed and participated in the expression of tribal values such as the distribution of catches to elders and other family members.

1960s and 1970s

During the 1960s and 1970s, tribal fishermen continued to assert their treaty-protected rights, sometimes at considerable risk to themselves. Indian people who participated in "fish-ins" in this period were beaten or jailed for their actions in asserting treaty rights. Local knowledge of streams and fishing technologies were retained and passed on to young people during these times. Traditional methods of welcoming salmon continued throughout the period, though less publicly than at present. Ceremonies were observed by families rather than by the community at large. The struggle in some ways reinforced the value of the fish to the people and their cultures. Tribal oral and written histories have incorporated the story of the struggle for treaty-protected fishing rights (Isely 1970, Deloria 1977; Wilkinson 2000; and Wray 2002).

1974 and Later: Co-Management and the Centrality of Salmon to the Culture

The 1974 Boldt decision in U.S. v. Washington, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals, and the United States Supreme Court affirmed tribal treaty rights to fish, and ushered in a new era for Indian fisheries. The Boldt decision mandated that the state share management of fisheries with Indians throughout the case area. Tribes adopted new technologies. Tribal people of the area now engage in ancient fisheries with up-to-date equipment. The Indian fisheries continue to be informed by generations-old social and cultural traditions that have been passed down from generation to generation. No culture stands still. Technologies are always changing, being modified, reinvented, or refined. Core values, beliefs, and traditions and their practice in daily life, that is, the non-material components of culture, sustain community and relationships despite these material changes.

3.5.2 Contemporary Fisheries

3.5.2.1 Salmon Species, Availability, and Cultural Preferences

Six species of salmon have been fished and continue to be fished by Indians in Puget Sound, Hood Canal, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca. These are:

- Sockeye or blueback salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka)*
- Chinook (*Oncorhynchus tschawytscha*)
- Coho or silver (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*)
- Chum (*Oncorhynchus keta*)
- Pink (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*)
- Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*).

Not all species enter each river; however, all species are available in the open waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Hood Canal, and Puget Sound. It is likely that there was year-around availability in these open marine waters in the past.

Species vary as to nutritional value, including fat content. Many Indian people express preferences regarding the desirability of certain species for consumption. Some species are appreciated as good smoking fish. For example, chum is a leaner fish that can be smoked and kept for a year or more. Smoked "Nisqually chum" is relished as a special treat even by those who live outside the Nisqually area. Coho are said to have similar qualities to chum for drying. Indian people look forward to the first spring chinook for fresh eating. Spring chinook is cured with a special soft smoke. Some Indian people say that salmon caught in salt water has a different flavor than that caught in fresh water, and that flavor differences vary even by the part of the river from which the salmon is harvested. Some fish of the same species are thought to be better (fatter and tastier, for example) in some rivers than in others.

3.5.2.2 Fishing Areas

The boundaries of traditional fisheries were fluid rather than confining during and before treaty time. Indigenous people in the area traveled seasonally, and often shared or traded resources and engaged in commerce outside of their winter village territories. Currently, fishing areas for individual tribes are not as fluid, and tribes fish within defined management areas. These areas have been allocated and established in accord with the Facts and Findings of U.S. v. Washington in 1974, and in subsequent court rulings. In general, tribal usual and accustomed fishing grounds and stations encompass the action area. The freshwater and marine areas within the Puget Sound Action Area are fished by one Puget Sound tribe or another.

3.5.2.3 Gear

Gear used in contemporary fisheries include: set gillnets, drift gillnets, purse seine, trap, hook and line, dip nets, trolling gear, beach seine, and round haul.

3.5.3 Salmon Uses and the Cultural Significance of Salmon

"We're *salmon* people and the Northwest is *salmon*. We still have hope" Billy Frank (Clausen 2000).

The relationship of tribal people to salmon is spiritual, emotional, and cultural as well as economic. Salmon evoke sharing, gifts from nature, responsibility to the resource, and connection to the land and the water. Salmon are strongly associated with the use and knowledge of water, use and knowledge of appropriate harvesting techniques, and knowledge of traditional processing techniques. The struggle to affirm the right to fish has made salmon an even more evocative symbol of tribal identity.

3.5.3.1 Use, Distribution and Sharing

Introduction

Indian people of the Puget Sound Action Area who fish today and carry on the salmon culture were raised in that culture and identify whole periods of their lives in relationship to the salmon. They remember teething on smoked salmon and talk about eating salmon eggs for breakfast, as a snack, or in salmon egg soup. Adult fishermen today remember catching fish, sometimes by hand, as children. As youngsters, they made a fire, and cleaned and cooked the salmon on the riverbank as a treat. Salmon is not just the primary traditional food but also a food that represents to the Indian all that is his or her history, a spiritual connection to the resource, and a responsibility to that resource. It must be present at all traditional ceremonies and functions, and is served during naming ceremonies, funerals, during one-year memorials after a death, and when students are honored. No ceremony, no gathering, is complete if salmon is not present. It is served to guests and during winter ceremonials. It is served to elders for their dinners, and shared or donated widely by fishermen with elders or family members. If a person doesn't fish him or herself, "all it takes is saying 'I'm really hungry for fish' and a salmon appears." If there is an abundance of fish, they are delivered around the reservation so everyone has a share. Some fishermen are known to fish regularly and to be ready to give some to tribal people who want to smoke fish or have some fresh fish to eat. Though between tribal people, the exchange of money for fish is not always a concern, some people make a substantial amount of their livelihood by selling smoked salmon to other members of the tribe, or to members of other tribes. Some fishermen, hit hard by the low per-pound return of commercial fisheries, have turned to "roadside sales" of fresh and smoked salmon to supplement income.

The sections below describe the role of salmon in the culture of action area tribes, and the role of salmon in the lives of many individual tribal members today. Examples here are taken primarily from interviews with tribal members. Examples are also drawn from tribal newsletters and other publications. The ways in which salmon is part of the lives of Indian people are as varied as the individual Indian people and Indian cultures of the action area. There are some important commonalities, and most items described below express those commonalities.

Personal and Family Consumption/Everyday Eating

Indian people within the action area value and eat salmon whenever it is available. This includes fresh, frozen, vacuum-packed, canned, and smoked salmon. Salmon is prepared in many ways. Some Indian people consume nearly every part of the salmon in some form, including eggs, flesh, skin, and bones. Some tribes help individual members with processing and storing salmon for home use. Some tribes have community smokehouses, pressure cookers (for canning), and machines for vacuum packing that tribal members may borrow.

Informal Interpersonal Distribution and Sharing

Sharing and informal distribution of fish help to bind the community in a system of relationships and obligations. There are many informal, everyday ways that salmon are shared and distributed within each tribe and between tribes. For example, community members who are not able to acquire salmon for themselves are given salmon by others. Indian people gift friends and neighbors on the reservation with salmon. Surplus is distributed or placed in tribal lockers and freezers for future distribution to individuals (or for traditional dinners or ceremonies). Smoked salmon is sold from the back of trucks and cars in tribal parking lots. Tribal people who have smokehouses take shares of the catch of fishermen in exchange for smoking fish for them. Fish, fresh, frozen, or smoked, is given as a gift to those who help a friend or relative with a task. Fish are commonly given to food banks for the needy, both Indian and non-Indian. The tradition of feeding others and sharing with non-Indian neighbors is one that goes back to the earliest accounts of Indian relations with Europeans and Americans within the action area. Reciprocity and exchange among kin and even non-related groups, including those with whom connections have been established throughout the action area, is a foundation of meaningful human interaction between and among Indian peoples in the area.

Formal Community Distribution and Sharing

There are formal, frequent or periodic occasions during which salmon is expected or required to be served. Among these are:

Elders' dinner or luncheons. Tribal fishermen contribute salmon to these meals. Tribes buy salmon or they stock donated salmon for these lunches and dinners. Salmon is served often, if not at least weekly, at luncheons. Some tribes serve lunches to elders at least three days a week. Dinners for elders are held frequently. These dinners include reciprocal intertribal dinners held for elders throughout the area. Traditional food is always present at these dinners, and salmon is an essential part of the dinners. Elders are often offered salmon to take home at the conclusion of both luncheons and dinners.

Distribution to elders. Tribes commonly deliver salmon to elders, who are regarded with special respect by tribal members and are not always able to fish for themselves. Some tribes make fresh salmon available at central distribution points for elders and others to take home and cook. When available, salmon make up a substantial portion of an elder's diet.

Community-wide and intertribal traditional dinners. Community-wide and intertribal dinners may be held for any number of reasons (e.g., funerals, celebrations, intertribal ties). Fish are contributed or the tribe sends out special boats for *ceremonial and subsistence* harvests in order to harvest salmon for these dinners. Those who fish commercially may put aside a portion of the catch for personal subsistence use, and also donate or be paid by the tribe for a portion to be stored and used for traditional community dinners at times of the year when salmon are not readily available. Tribes provide storage facilities so that catches can be kept on-hand for these dinners. Some tribes tax fishermen and use the tax money to buy additional salmon from other tribes to keep on-hand for traditional dinners.

Cultural dinners with other tribes. An example of a cultural dinner with other tribes is the annual Canoe Journey that involves tribes from throughout the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Hood Canal, Puget Sound, and beyond. Welcoming dinners for event participants feature salmon.

Dinners for guests and invited outsiders feature traditional foods. Often these meals, featuring salmon, are to honor someone or some event. Hosting guests and serving traditional food, including salmon, is an important part of traditional culture.

Honoring students. Salmon is used in events that honor students and others for special achievements.

Food basket distribution. Some tribes distribute food baskets to tribal members at Thanksgiving and Christmas, and include smoked fish in the baskets.

Weddings. Salmon is part of the traditional meal served whenever a wedding takes place.

Health fairs. Traditional foods, including salmon, are featured at health fairs. The value of a traditional diet comprised of traditional foods is emphasized among many tribal leaders and educators who voice concern with health issues, such as diabetes, prevalent among tribal people. Many of these health issues are, they believe, linked to the loss of the plant, fish, and animal diet that was available to and followed by their ancestors.

Ceremonial Uses

In addition to tribally-sponsored dinners, salmon is a key food, among other traditional foods, in ceremonies. Tribes whose fisheries are depleted buy salmon from other tribes or receive donations of

fish for use or distribution for ceremonial and subsistence needs. Tribes make an effort to keep salmon on-hand or send out special boats for these occasions.

Examples of other ceremonies that require traditional meals, including salmon, are winter ceremonials, naming ceremonies, giveaways and feasts, and funerals. Winter ceremonials serve guests who have traveled from throughout the action area. These ceremonies may last many days, and are held frequently during the winter months. Naming ceremonies, as well as giveaways and feasts, which are held frequently, are common throughout the action area. Indian funerals in the action area are large gatherings typically attended by the community at large, usually by more than 100 people. Funerals are accompanied by traditional meals that include salmon. These meals may take several days of preparation. Those who cook and serve must be fed, as well. The death of a tribal member is marked by remembrances or memorials a year later. Burnings are held to feed the deceased at other times. All of these events require the use of traditional foods, including salmon.

The First Salmon Ceremony and the Cultural Foundation of Contemporary Management Practices

Traditionally, Indians throughout the action area have treated salmon ceremoniously (Gunther 1926 and 1928). These ceremonies, based on ancient teachings and practices, continue today and underscore the need to welcome the fish by providing a clean place to which the salmon will want to return. According to Indian teachings, the fish come to feed the Indian people, but they will not come back if the environment is not suitably maintained or salmon are not treated properly. Elmendorf is specific about this requirement: "Most ritually-determined acts with reference to river fishing had to do with the salmon run and were directed toward insuring its continuance. The river had to be kept clean before salmon started running. HA (an informant) defined the period as starting in early August (for the Skokomish), before the first king salmon came. From this time, no rubbish, food scraps or the like, might be thrown in the river; canoes were not baled out in the river; and no women swam in the river during menstrual seclusion. The object of these precautions was to insure that the salmon would want to come" (Elmendorf [1960] 1992). Traditional first salmon ceremonies varied from location to location, depending upon species, time of the run, and cultural differences from tribe to tribe (Gunther 1927; Stern 1934; and Smith 1940). Several of the tribes within the action area use the spring salmon (chinook) in their first salmon ceremony.

Currently, first salmon ceremonies focus on thanking the fish for returning and assuring the entire community of a successful harvest. These ceremonies also draw attention to the responsibility Indian people have for providing a clean, welcoming habitat for the returning fish. Many tribes incorporate a

blessing of the Indian fishing fleets or individual fishermen or fisherwomen with these ceremonies. Some ceremonies welcome non-Indian people as witnesses who are typically served salmon dinners. This welcoming of non-Indian people to be present at first salmon ceremonies is an effort to engage more of the action area's residents in sharing responsibility for the salmon and for the habitat.

First salmon ceremonies were not always publicly, or even communally, celebrated during a period of years preceding U.S. v. Washington. Some fishermen and fisherwomen continued a more private version of this ceremony, individually sharing out the first catch of the season with other community members. This practice still continues in some tribes in addition to the public ceremony. These ceremonies, once again public, are common in many communities, especially since U.S. v. Washington and the passage of the American Indian Religious Freedom Act in 1978. The ceremony reiterates and reinforces the special relationship of the Indian people to the salmon, and their respect and concern for the well-being of the salmon. Furthermore, the ceremony exhibits cultural continuity with the past and contemporary linkages to traditional cultural practices.

Modern fisheries and fishing practices of tribes are built on long-standing traditional ideas of responsibilities to fish and habitat. These practices and ideals underlie tribal approaches to management of individual salmon runs and commitment to do what is necessary to sustain runs. As one tribal member put it, "the first salmon ceremony contains the elements of fisheries management that we use today." That is, tribes manage fisheries with the assumption that fish need a clean, welcoming environment and a respectful, nurturing approach to maintaining and restoring habitat, especially spawning grounds.

3.5.3.2 Tribes and Relationship to Salmon: Responsibility and Stewardship

During the post U.S. v. Washington period, tribes have developed fisheries that promote the centrality of fish to the community and the community's responsibility to the fish. This responsibility is, as articulated by tribal people, based upon traditional teachings. While fishermen are trained in the use of new equipment and safety regulations, the status and role of the fishermen is based upon traditional understandings of the resource and habitat. The fishermen continue to contribute to the health of the tribal members by bringing in food for the community. Tribal hatcheries and stream restoration projects take advantage of new science, but are developed in the context of local knowledge and traditional regard for responsible stewardship of the land, the rivers, and the fish runs.

Tribes are working in partnerships with local, state, and federal governments, businesses, and farmers to repair degraded habitats and the polluting effects of urbanization and agricultural practices. New fish

processing plants are being developed at the same time as traditional and contemporary preservation methods are being taught and passed on to younger tribal members. Fish cured in traditional ways are still a focus of community trade in fish, carrying the added value of history and custom.

In many ways, since U.S. v. Washington, because fishing is open and religious practices are protected, fish have become even more central to tribal identities than they were 50 years ago. Fishing is not the "under cover of darkness" activity it was by necessity for so many years. But because of the difficulties encountered during those many years, salmon are not just a food or even simply a symbol of a long and proud tradition, but a reminder of the tribal struggle to assert rights. Many of those who fish today lived that struggle and pass on their commitment to their history and their right to fish to the younger generation (Deloria 1977). In the words of one tribal person, the fish "feed the Indian" not just in body, but in spirit.

3.5.3.3 The Transmission of Fishing Culture

Youngsters, as in the past, are taught from an early age to fish and to understand that they, as tribal members, have a special responsibility to the salmon and the habitat in which it thrives. Indian fishermen and women take their children fishing and remember being taken fishing by relatives when they were growing up. When children fish with older friends and relatives, they not only learn the skills of taking and processing fish, but also hear the history and tradition of the tribes and are taught how to be a responsible member of the community. For example, beach seining is a multi-generational, group activity during which elders sit on beaches watching and advising while young people harvest the fish. During the work of fishing, everyone joins in conversations about the place, the salmon, and the history of salmon fishing, and youngsters listen to the stories shared by the elders.

Fishing is considered to be an activity that is a critical part of a tribal member's identity. No matter what else one does, learning to fish is part of one's education. Specific examples of this education include:

- Young people are taught how to work with fishing gear, how to maintain gear, how to fillet fish, and how to prepare fish for curing, freezing, and canning.
- Young people are encouraged to help elders and relatives or older tribal members with smoking fish and thus learn all the skills required for traditional smoking. This includes learning to how fillet the fish, carve the sticks on which the fish are smoked, gather and split wood for the smokehouse, thread the fish on sticks, hang the fish in the smokehouse, assure proper air circulation in the smokehouse, and tend the fires.
- Elders teach younger tribal members about smoking and other traditional skills associated with fish in less direct ways. For example, an elder may sample fish smoked by a younger tribal

member and comment on flavor and degree of dryness. An elder may visit and assess a smoke house put up by a younger tribal member.

- Elders teach awareness of the environment and the place of fish in the environment. The whole landscape is a reminder of the salmon and its centrality to the culture. For example, in South Puget Sound, the elders watch the salal berries and, if there are plenty, they say there will be plenty of salmon. Because the sword fern is part of the First Salmon Ceremony, even seeing sword fern in the environment reminds one of the salmon, and elders comment on it.

3.5.3.4 Other Activities That Underscore The Significance of Salmon in Contemporary Indian Culture

One has to participate in a culture in order for it to survive. Fishing for salmon is a part of tribal life among the Indians of the Puget Sound Action Area. Tribes have developed many ways for tribal members of all ages to feel connected with the tribe and tribal culture, and to participate in community life. Fishing and responsibility for salmon and salmon habitat is a core area for participation. There are other ways to make a living, but fishing is "in the blood," Indian people say. You "develop a relationship with salmon" from the time you are a youngster. Fishing is central to the identity of the tribes within the action area. Tribal members continue to invest in boats and nets and go fishing even if fishing is not always economically viable. Indian people teach younger family members to feel responsibility to the fish. Ways other than fishing that sustain participation in the fish culture include:

School programs. The transmission of culture and the importance of salmon to tribal identity is taught through curricula and special school programs, including language programs that feature stories of salmon and first salmon ceremonies.

Headstart programs: participation in restocking programs.

Fishing derbies for children and teens.

Strategies for protection and restoration. The "Wild Stock Restoration Initiative" created in 1996 by the tribes in conjunction with the State of Washington is an example of a strategy for protection and restoration of salmon. Tribes have voluntarily reduced harvests in order to respond to the issue of endangered salmon stocks, thus showing that they are willing to live with self-imposed restrictions to get the fish back – "if we [Indians] don't take care of the fish, we too will expire." Large numbers of fisheries biologists are employed by tribes, further signifying the tribes' commitment to the resource.

Publications/public relations that depict tribal involvement with fisheries, habitat enhancement, and fisheries programs in general. Tribal partnerships with businesses and state, federal and local government to enhance fish habitat.

On-the-job options within tribes to take time off work to fish. These options recognize both the importance of the food to families and the value to tribal identity of supporting involvement with fishing.

Cultural resource management programs. Creation of culture and heritage and tribally-operated cultural resource management programs to enhance and celebrate relationship with the past and especially recognize and maintain cultural resources that support long-standing relationship to salmon.

Tribal plaques and logos on shirts, hats, and tribal stationary that feature salmon.

Art that features salmon iconography.

Museums and exhibits that feature fish technology and relationships to water and fisheries; repatriation of items of significance to salmon fisheries. Also exhibits, including historic and contemporary photographs, that honor generations of fishermen and their contributions to the tribes.

3.5.3.5 Summary

The availability of salmon as an economic base and a cultural, ceremonial, and religious staple has provided for enhanced social cohesion and promoted cultural vitality among Puget Sound tribes. Its centrality to the Indian culture has been reaffirmed by court cases like U.S. v. Washington. Some refer to it as "a calling back home." In many instances, Indian people came back to live with relatives and friends on reservations because there was economic opportunity. The enhanced fisheries opportunities demanded that new generations of fishermen and women be trained. The core group of elders and fishermen who had local knowledge of the waters, the currents, the tides, the habits of fish, and the requirement of habitat came forward to train others in this specialized cultural knowledge. New technologies were learned and taught along with the guidance of local, traditional knowledge.

Indian people express a holistic relationship to the land and the waterways, as well as to the salmon and other creatures dependent upon the health of the land and environment. Little differentiation is made between and among spirit, nature, and culture when they speak of their obligations. Tribal people characterize their relationship to salmon as a dynamic and demanding one. The relationship draws upon indigenous teachings and insights.

The obligation to salmon articulated by Indian people is one concerned with renewal, reciprocity, and balance. Salmon is of economic importance to Indian people, and it embodies cultural, ceremonial, and social dimensions of their lives to the degree that it is a significant symbol of Indian and tribal identity. Tribal identity is realized and expressed in the many daily acts in which they engage. For the Indian people within the Puget Sound Action Area, many of those acts involve or include salmon. Tribal people have a strong present connection with salmon, and share a passionate concern for the future of salmon in the marine waters, rivers, lakes, and streams in the action area.